

Michigan NETStalk

Michigan Network of Employers For Traffic Safety

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Editor: Dan Vartanian

Telephone: (517) 333-5322, Fax: (517) 333-5756, E-Mail: vartanid@state.mi.us

Internet web page: <http://www.michnets.org>

NETS Advisory Council members • Detroit Edison • Traffic Safety Association of Michigan
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2001 Drive Safely Work Week Campaign— September 10–14, 2001

Order your kit today!

The Driving Force: National Drive Safely Work Week (DSWW) is September 10–14, 2001. This year's campaign focuses on the issue of distracted driving. Although a flood of media attention has been placed on distracted driving, few reports have gone the extra step to offer real-world solutions to combatting the issue. Evidence suggests that calling attention to the issues involved in distracted driving holds potential for helping all drivers become more aware of distractions that may contribute to crashes and, help them stay more focused on the road.

Putting You on Course: The 2001 DSWW tool kit is packed with information and messaging to help draw attention to the contributing factors in distracted driving and enable employees to identify and develop strategies to better manage them. In addition, the kit provides materials and activities to use as constant reminders to help keep your employees buckled up. Safety belts are everyone's best defense against the distracted drivers sharing the roads with us!

Inside the campaign toolkit, you'll find everything you need to launch a successful campaign. **These materials are not dated and may be used throughout the year to promote safety.** The tool kit contains:

- Your own "road map" complete with detailed instructions, ideas and activities to make it simple for you to implement a memorable and effective campaign
- Fact sheets filled with information and traffic safety tips in both of the key issue areas.

- A sample newsletter article for your company publications
- A campaign poster to display at your place of business
- Camera-ready artwork that can be used for paycheck stuffers, table tents, daily communications messages, the creation of your own campaign flyers and more to customize your campaign
- A catalogue of other products and incentives that you can order to support safe driving activities including training videos, T-shirts, hats, pens, post-it notes and much more!
- A CD ROM with most of the information on this campaign that can be downloaded on almost any desktop computer



Get on the Road to Safety & Order your campaign kit today at a reduced price!

Last year, more than half a million Michigan employees were reached by the campaign's safe driving messages. This year the process for obtaining a kit has changed. Michigan NETS will partially subsidize the cost of the campaign tool kit so that for just \$15, Michigan employers can improve employee relations and enhance safety while having a positive impact on their company's bottom line!

To receive the 40% discount off the full price of \$25, **order your tool kit today by calling (888) 221-0045.** Please, only one discount per company.

For more information, visit the National NETS website online at www.trafficsafety.org



NEWS YOU CAN USE

NETS Website

If it's been awhile since you last visited the Michigan NETS website, please take a few minutes to log onto www.michnets.org and surf through the site. Many new enhancements have been made including a new "resource" site that will provide you with many more useful links to traffic safety information. And, if you haven't ordered your new **free** Repeat Offender Employer Education kit, take this opportunity to order the kit today. Once you're on the NETS homepage, click the icon entitled, "The Laws Have Changed," and follow the online instructions. This new kit is designed to help employers and employees understand the state's tough, new repeat offender laws. Please provide feedback of the new site by e-mailing Michigan NETS Coordinator Dan Vartanian at vartanid@state.mi.us. Your comments would be most appreciated.

A note of thanks from a satisfied customer:

"I'm really impressed. I received the NETStalk newsletter two days ago. I got to the back page and read about the "Click It or Ticket It" signs being offered, and I immediately ordered two of them. To my surprise, they arrived this morning. I wanted to write and thank you for allowing us to have these signs to post. This is a great reminder, not only for our staff, but our consumers as well. We will have the signs posted at the drives of our Cadillac/Administrative Office as well as our office in Houghton Lake. I'm very excited about getting these put up as soon as possible. Thanks again." From Bill Woodward, Safety Coordinator, North Central Community Mental Health, Cadillac, MI.

Two new videos available

The Michigan Center for Truck Safety recently announced the availability of two new videos that are available to the motoring public. The first entitled, "Sharing the Road" is a driver education video which addresses the following safety tips: blind spots or no zones; merging and exiting; stopping distances; left and right turns; following distances. This video was produced at the Michigan International Speedway, emphasizing that both race car drivers and truck drivers are trained professionals with particular safety concerns when sharing the road.

A second video bearing the same title, "Sharing the Road" was developed last fall for senior drivers and general truck safety video. Although targeted to specific age groups, the videos would be useful for broader audiences too. The videos can be obtained by calling the Michigan Center for Truck Safety at (800) 682-4682, ext. 11.

Sixth Annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit a Success!

The Sixth Annual Traffic Safety Summit was held May 15-16, 2001 at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The event this year attracted over 350 traffic safety professionals from around the state. The goal of the Summit was to learn from each other's experiences and, as a result, deliver common sense solutions to critical highway safety issues, including impaired driving, engineering, child passenger safety, occupant protection, Safe Communities programs and traffic enforcement.



Highlights of this year's conference included workshops and sessions on: the impact of today's music on youth culture and their risky behaviors; the important role EMS plays in traffic safety; and a fresh look at the problem of distracted driving including debate over new technology and research.

On the final day of the conference, the Michigan State Safety Commission recognized an outstanding group of individuals, programs and organizations for their invaluable contributions to traffic safety in Michigan.



L-R, Candice Miller, Secretary of State; Jay Minotas, Manager, GM Safe Driving Program; Col. Michael Robinson, Director, Michigan State Police

Michigan NETS is pleased to announce that General Motors Safe Driving program received an award at the Summit for their continuous contributions to traffic safety in Michigan. GM's Safe Driving Program addresses the proper use of safety belts and child car seats, the dangers of drinking and driving and appropriate driving behaviors to remind its employees, retirees, their family members and the community of the importance of driving safely. Accepting the award on behalf of General Motors was the manager of the program and Michigan NETS Advisory Board member, Jay Minotas.

The success of this year's conference was due in large part to the generous financial and in-kind support provided by corporate partners. Michigan NETS extends our heartfelt thanks to the following businesses:

Platinum sponsors: Ford Motor Company, General Motors Safe Driving Program, United Parcel Service

Gold sponsors: AAA Michigan, DaimlerChrysler

Silver sponsors: Cadillac Asphalt Paving, Corporate Fleet Services, Inc., Engineering & Environmental Services Group, Inc., Fyen Zylstra, Inc., John R. Howell, Inc., Liberty Mutual Group, Mort Crimm Communications, NES Worksafe, Shering-Plough, Slagter Construction Co., Spicer Group, Inc., Tony Angelo Cement Construction Co., Traffic Control Corp., and Tran Tech Electric.

In kind contributions: Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Boyne USA Resorts, The Emerald at Maple Creek Golf Course, Gordon Food Service, LETS Transportation, Michigan Road Builders Assoc., Timber Ridge Golf Course, Two men and A Truck International, and Haworth, Inc.

Next year's conference promises to be another valuable opportunity to learn about emerging traffic safety issues and community programs that are making a difference, and to share updates on federal, state, and local traffic safety initiatives. The Seventh Annual Traffic Safety Summit will take place April 30-May 1, 2002, in Lansing, Michigan. Watch the OHSP website for further information—www.ohsp.state.mi.us

Defensive Driving Course Offered to NETS Members

Over the last quarter, Michigan NETS teamed up with the Traffic Safety Association of Michigan and conducted two "Teaching Defensive Driving" instructor development courses utilizing the curriculum provided by the National Safety Council. The two-day classes both took place in Lansing in March and again in May.

This program is a standardized instructor development program designed to give the knowledge and skills necessary to be an outstanding Defensive Driving Course (DDC) instructor. It is designed to prepare the student for the job of teaching the National Safety Council's DDC-4 course curriculum.

The course provided both the technical information needed to teach DDC as well as effective methods and techniques for teaching adults. Because this course is specially designed for DDC instructors, it includes only those topics relating to teaching a DDC program. There aren't any unrelated games or activities—only those that have practical value to DDC instructors.

Furthermore, this course is intended to be an example of the methods and techniques it recommends. For this reason, students can learn from this class in two important ways. First, from the concepts and methods being taught. Second, by watching how this class is being taught, then by practicing the methods and techniques.

The March course was attended by the following businesses: Charter Communications, General Motors, Livonia Public Schools, Grand Rapids Medial Education & Research Center, Hope Network West Michigan Transportation, Michigan Center for Truck Safety, Sears Authorized Driving School and United Parcel Service.

As a result of the March class, Charter Communications which has regional offices in Grand Rapids, contracted a class to benefit their employees in Michigan which was held in May 2001. Charter

Communications is the fourth largest cable company in the U.S. and has over 650 fleet vehicles located in Michigan.

"Charter Communications believes that no job or service is so important or urgent that time cannot be taken by all concerned to perform the job in a safe and healthy manner... even more so while driving. Charter's primary objective is to instill in the minds of their drivers an 'attitude' of driver awareness, which makes the Defensive Driver Training Course a perfect fit. Thank you Tom and Dan for the attitude adjustment we needed," said Bob Brietske, Regional Director of Technical Training, Michigan Region, Charter Communications.



Charter Communications defensive driving class.

New Traffic Safety Laws Take Effect in Michigan

The Michigan Department of State Police announced three new important laws that have recently taken effect in the State of Michigan.

Riding In The Open Bed Of A Pickup Truck

Tragically every year children are killed or injured while riding in the open bed of a pickup truck. This new law prohibits an operator from allowing a person less than 18 years of age to ride in the open bed of a pickup truck traveling at a speed greater than 15 miles per hour on a roadway.

Emergency Vehicle Caution

Upon approaching a stationary emergency vehicle with its emergency lights activated, the operator of a vehicle must carefully move into an open lane at least one lane away from the emergency vehicle. If this is not possible, the operator must slow and pass with caution, allowing the emergency vehicle as much space as possible. The law applies to all types of emergency vehicles, not just police vehicles.



New Law Designed to Make Big Trailers More Visible

Officers from the Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division will begin inspecting large vehicles for compliance with a new law requiring certain trailers and semitrailers to display retroreflective sheeting and reflex reflectors. The law is aimed at making trailers and semi-trailers more visible in low-light conditions.

The federal requirement, which has now been adopted in Michigan, requires trailers and semi-trailers over 80 inches wide, with a gross weight rating of 10,000 pounds or more, and manufactured before December 1, 1993, to have retroreflective tape affixed to the trailers. Trailers and semi-trailers manufactured after December 1, 1993, are covered under a previous regulation.

Trailers that are manufactured exclusively for use as offices or dwellings, pole trailers, and trailers transported in driveway-tow-away operations are exempt from the taping requirements.

Questions regarding the new regulation should be directed to Lt. David Ford, Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division, at 517-336-6449.





State of Michigan
Department of State Police
Office of Highway Safety Planning
4000 Collins Road
P.O. Box 30633
Lansing, MI 48909



Michigan NETS Develops Strategic Plan

The Corporate Outreach program associated with the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning has been promoting traffic safety in the workplace for the last 8 years. Since 1994, the corporate program has utilized the NETS philosophy and resources in promoting traffic safety in the workplace.

As a result of our growing pains we felt it necessary to undertake a strategic planning process. The purpose of this plan is to review past accomplishments and focus on new initiatives to produce the greatest gains in highway safety.

The purpose of devoting energy and resources to a strategic planning exercise is to chart a course for the future. Ideally it documents a leadership consensus on the programmatic objectives to be accomplished over the next three to five years. This plan which will be completed soon, will lay out a series of strategies for targeting and recruiting the employer community in Michigan.



Preparation for the planning process included key interviews with current safety partners and, in some cases, persons not directly connected to the organization to ensure an objective "outsider's" viewpoint.

Michigan NETS owes a debt of gratitude to the NETS Advisory Board members who devoted many hours providing input, direction and guidance in developing the strategic plan. This planning document was a major undertaking for the NETS board, who will participate in implementing the recommendations suggested in the plan. As the implementation takes place, the NETS Advisory Board will review the plans to ensure that NETS members will receive the greatest benefits. The Plan will be finalized by the end of June, 2001 and work will begin immediately to incorporate the recommendations into the current year and next year's program objectives. We will keep you informed on the progress of our plan in future issues of *NETstalk*.

Cell Phone Tips

AAA Michigan shares the following cell phone tips for your driving safety.

Studies show that talking on a cell phone in a moving vehicle quadruples the risk of collisions. Safe driving requires caution, courtesy, common sense and alertness under any traffic conditions.

To improve concentration while driving with a cell phone:

- Place calls while stopped or have someone dial for you.
- Use the cell phone in the 'hands-free' mode. Keep in mind, though, that 'hands-free' is not always 'risk-free.'
- Avoid intense or complicated conversations. The more complex the conversation, the higher the level of distraction.

Some other safety tips for cell phone users include:

- Always buckle up.
- Always assess traffic conditions before placing a call.

- Give driving your full attention. Driver inattention is estimated to be a factor in 25-50 percent of all highway collisions.
- Ensure that the phone is within easy reach.
- Use 'memory dial' to minimize dialing time. Do not take notes or look up phone numbers while driving.



Anything that's a distraction—a passenger, radio, CD player or cellular phone—interferes with the driver's concentration. Hi-tech or low-tech, keep your attention on the road.